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**La Colombie Britannique. Étude sur la colonisation au Canada.**  
**Par Albert Métin.** À. Colin, Paris, 1908.

A very conscientious, elaborate, tersely and logically written description of British Columbia, from the standpoint of geography and economic conditions and outlooks. The geology of the country is the sub-stratum on which the work is built up, then follow the flora and fauna, man forming the apex of the structure. This is already observed in the introduction. A mass of detail is crowded into this octavo volume of over 400 pages, yet it is not wearisome to read for whosoever takes a special interest in the subject. Thirty-three photogravures and twenty maps and charts accompany the text.

"It may be said of Columbia that it was made valuable ere being scientifically studied and that its geography has come after economic development." With this sentence the introduction begins and, while it is true, it also holds good for many other regions of the globe. Nevertheless, the history of discovery and exploration of the territory, as very well given in that introduction, proves that, here as elsewhere, exploration, coupled with scientific research, preceded to a limited extent, at least, the attempts at colonization and improvement. The scientific (nautical) labours of James Cook and George Vancouver opened the coast to the practical work of seal fishery, and Mackenzie disclosed the geography of the interior at a time when trappers and fur-traders were beginning to penetrate towards British Columbia. The author pays a generous tribute of respect to the geographical and other scientific researches performed by the English, on the coast as well as inland, and in this he stands in favourable contrast with the general British tendency to belittle or sneer at, causelessly, the work of other nationalities in foreign lands. A veritable tribute of admiration is paid by him to the energy and industrial activity of the inhabitants of Columbia, who, while not numbering quite 200,000 souls, including 25,000 Indians, produced in 1906 nearly \$50,000,000, or \$250 for every man, woman or child in the territory. It is true that about one-half of this production proceeds from mines; and this in a region not well adapted to human abode, to which, for the subsistence of the people, \$7,000,000 worth of agricultural and animal products must be imported annually, because the home production remains insufficient.

The first part of the six into which the body of the book is divided, consists of five chapters devoted to a detailed description of the topography of the country (beginning with the islands that skirt the coast), its orography, all resting on the basis of a careful geological study. The latter may even seem to be too minute for the scope of the work and tiresome through superabundance of details, and yet it is by no means superfluous. We might even wish for a greater number of hypsometric data, but they were probably not at the author's command.

The second part, in three chapters, treats of the climate or rather of the three climates: that of the coast, of the arid inland sections, and of the mountains. He characterizes each type with care and precision. Equally conscientious are his observations on the glaciers, the lakes and rivers. While the study of the Columbian glaciers does not seem to be greatly advanced, it is well to note that, with the exception of one, they have been receding steadily since 1887, an observation which is also made in the South American Andes, where the retrocession is about equal to that observed in British Columbia.

Vegetation, as far as arboriferous, presents two distinct zones: the northern, which bears the arctic character, and the southern, closely allied to the flora of

the United States. The highest summits of the mountains are, of course, denuded, and much of the interior tableland is bare owing to aridity, otherwise the territory is well supplied with timber of considerable economic value. The prevailing forms and species are too well known to need recapitulation.

The third part is properly ethnographic and historic. A cursory and quite complete list of the various expeditions to the coast of Columbia forms the beginning, the Spaniards, of course, heading the record. The expedition of Juan de Fuca is, perhaps, not so doubtful as the author represents it to be, and as to the statement that the Strait of Anian appears on one map (from 1598), we might suggest the modification that it appears on several and on at least one globe from the sixteenth century.

The very interesting continuations of this historical part cannot be reviewed in detail. Their connection with geography is obvious and their value for an understanding of the development and present condition of the colony very great. The same fairness in judging of conditions far different from those met with in any French colony would be well worthy the imitation of British writers when treating of other countries and other peoples.

A long and detailed chapter on the Indians is very properly divided into two parts, one of which treats of the Indian as far as he has still preserved ancient customs and manners, while the other presents a picture of the changes that have taken place with the aborigines under the influence of growing contact with civilization. The last chapter of part 3 is devoted to "Population and Immigration." It is, of course, replete with statistics, and no pains have been spared to gather abundant and reliable information.

The three remaining parts are strictly devoted to what might be termed economic geography. Fishing, hunting and agriculture head the list, then follow the mines, and, lastly, a glance (and an important one too) at what the author calls "Economic Regions." The contents of these parts again bear testimony to the carefulness and assiduity of the writer. It is an arduous task to get together such a volume of facts and to present them finally in a manner, if not always attractive, at least very seldom tedious.

A. F. B.

**Pflanzengeographie. Von Professor Dr. Ludwig Diels.** 164 pp. and Sketch Map. G. J. Göschen'sche Verlagshandlung, Leipzig, 1908. (Price, 80 pf.)

A condensed description of the distribution of plant life, the natural influences which promote its growth and the forms of vegetation characterizing regions of different natural conditions. The work of a botanical authority and a good example of the treatment, adequate for many purposes, of a scientific topic in short compass, for which the Sammlung Göschen is noted.

**L'Afrique du Nord. Par Henri Lorin.** 418 pp., 27 Engravings, 5 Maps and Index. Armand Colin, Paris, 1903. (Price, 3.50 frs.)

Prof. Lorin has brought together in this volume the information necessary to give most readers an adequate acquaintance with the general and regional geography of Tunis, Algeria and Morocco and with the problems relating to their economic and political development. His book is especially designed for teachers and advanced students, officials and colonists. It is an excellent work, prepared largely on the model of the two series of advanced text-books, "Nouveau Cours de Géographie," produced by the publishing houses of Delagrave and Hachette.